

SAMMAMISH P L A T E A U

WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

June 21, 2011

Growth Management Planning Council
Paul Reitenbach, Senior Policy Analyst
King County Department of Development and Environmental Services
900 Oakesdale Avenue SW
Renton, WA 98057-5212

RE: King County Countywide Planning Policies

Dear Mr. Reitenbach:

The Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District was incorporated in 1948 pursuant to Title 57 RCW: Water-sewer districts. The District provides water and sewer service to a population area estimated to be approximately 55,000 people. As the District has grown and developed, it has done so relative to the geography and physical influences of utility service delivery boundaries, as opposed to traditional city limits. In serving the majority of the City of Sammamish, a significant portion of the City of Issaquah, and adjacent portions of both urban and rural King County, the District in essence is a small regional provider of utility services.

The District Board of Commissioners is well aware of the debate concerning whether cities or districts should be providing urban level of services. The arguments began with language and subsequent modifications to the State Growth Management a number of years ago. The Board feels that because of this enmity over time, we have lost sight of the objective: providing the best possible urban service delivery and governance. Let's focus our vision on a future that may need new and creative solutions.

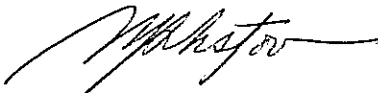
The Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District believes that the answer may be a city, it may be a district, or it may be some other form of governance. The Growth Management Planning Council should not be promulgating policy that is too narrow and precludes opportunities to be collaborative and creative. As an extremely successful example, the Cascade Water Alliance came together ten years ago as a coalition of eight cities and water districts, including the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, to secure drinking water supplies for a large portion of the King County urban area.

This year Cascade spearheaded an initiative which resulted in the passage of House Bill 1332. This legislation had overwhelming support from governments in urban areas from across the State and passed the legislature with bi-partisan support. The bill allows an effective way for cities, districts, counties, and other governmental entities to form together to provide municipal water, wastewater, stormwater, and floodwater utility services. The legislation was successful because of the widespread need to think beyond current governmental structures and to find ways to be more efficient and effective in delivering services.

The language as proposed in section PFS-3 of the proposed policies could preclude the services that our customers, residents, and business want and deserve. The policy should be revised to be more expansive and provide the ability for local governments to work together to find the best solutions for their communities. We encourage the Growth Management Planning Council to consider a similar approach as opposed to predispositions based upon city limits or type of government. The corporate boundaries of government do not always correspond to the boundaries of service efficiency.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,



Mary Shustov
President and Commissioner

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